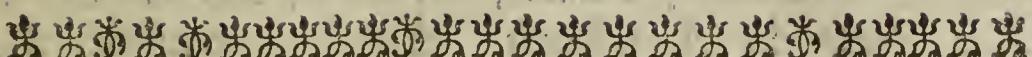


1014 P

O B S E R V A T I O N S
ON THE
Marine of *France*.



MILDWAX, SIR W.



O B S E R V A T I O N S, &c.

THE Administration of the Marine of *France* is deputed to one of the Secretaries of State, under the Title of *Minister of the Marine*; who superintends all the Jurisdictions of the Admiralty and the Police of the Ports, established by the Marine Ordonnance of 1681, as also all the naval Armaments and Arsenals of the Marine, the Pay of the Seamen, and the Duty of all the Intendants and Commissaries at the several Departments, regulated by the Ordonnance of 1689. These are the two noted Ordonnances which contain all the Rules and Regulations concerning both the civil Oeconomy and military Execution, by which the Marine of *France* was intended to be raised to an Equality with its most formidable Rivals in naval Power.

There are four Royal Ports, subservient to this Administration, maintained by the King, and destined for the building and equipping the Ships of his Navy, namely, *Toulon*, *Rochefort*, *Brest*, and *Havre de Grace*, which have other Ports relevant and dependant on them; thus *Marseilles* is dependant on *Toulon*; *Bayonne* on *Rochefort*, *Port Lewis*

on *Brest*, and *Dunkirk* on *Havre de Grace*. All the other Ports of the Kingdom, such as *Bourdeaux*, *la Rochelle*, *Nantes*, *St. Malo*, &c. are called *Les Ports des Merchants*. An Intendant of the Marine presides at each of these Royal Ports ; who from Time to Time sends up to the Minister of the Marine an Account of the State of his Dock Yards, what Works are going forward, and what Stores are required ; and at the End of every Year an Estimate of the Expence is made out for the ensuing Year by the Minister of the Marine, jointly with the Controller-General of the Finances, under the following Articles respectively, *viz.* Appointments — Day Labourers — Salaries — Armaments and Disarmaments — Purchase of Merchandises and Munitions — Hospitals — Hire of Magazines — and extraordinary Expences. Upon each of which, Instructions are sent down to the Intendants according to what Ships may be necessary to be built, refitted, or equipped ; or what Stores may be wanting ; or Regulations necessary to be made. The Expences of all which we may suppose to vary every Year, as they must depend on occasional Circumstances, and the different Exigences of the State in Times of Peace or of War. By the Edict of *September 1748*, it is recited, that his Majesty had destined twenty Millions of Livres, which amounts to 875000 Pounds Sterling, to be issued out of his Treasury each Year, for the Support of his Marine ; but this Appropriation has been but little regarded, and the Sums applicable to that Use have, happily for us, been dissipated to other less important Purposes.

When a Ship is put into Commission, the King appoints the Officers ; and, at the same Time, the

Com-

Commissaries of the Marine compleat what they call the Equipage, by summoning the inrolled Seamen that are registered and classed in their Departments, to enter and make up the Number wanting to man the Ship according to its Rate; no registered Seamen can be employed on board a Merchant Ship, without a License from these Commissaries, and upon his Return to *France* must give Notice so as to be ready to enter on board a Man of War, upon being summoned as above: All that are liable thus to be called upon to enter into this Part of the King's Service, are registered, classed, and divided in the several Departments of *Toulon*, *Rochefort*, and *Brest*; each of which contain several Provinces; for Example, *Toulon* takes in *Provence*, *Languedoc*, and *Roussillon*; *Rochefort* contains the Country of *Aunis*, *Poitou*, *Gascony*, and *Biscay*; and *Brest* contains *Brittany* and *Normandy*. The Registry is made up of the Numbers which every Town in these Provinces is able to supply, all that are liable to be called upon, being classed, as belonging to one or the other of these Departments; the Lists of which being too long to be inserted here, I shall only set down the general Recapitulation, as it appeared on Paper from the last Inspection made by the Commissaries before this War was declared, *viz.*

From the Department of *Toulon* — 21700

Rochefort — 21000

Brest — 54300

97000

But, that we may not conceive too high a Notion of the Marine of *France* from this pompous Number of Seamen on their Registry, we should be cautioned to take Notice, that amongst these are registered, all the Ship Carpenters, Coopers, and Iron Smiths employed in the several Dock-Yards; also all the Boatmen, Bargemen, Float-men, and Fisherman exercising their Trades on the several Streams and Rivers throughout the interiour Parts of the Kingdom, and lastly, the Invalids and superannuated Seamen, who, though uncapable of Service, are kept upon the Register: All these being deducted, will take off near one Third of the Numbers of what they call their clas-sed Seamen. The Remainder we may suppose to be such fresh and able-bodied Seamen as are ne-cessarily wanting to be employed in the King's and the Merchant's Service.

Here let me remark, that all who are thus re-gistered, are deemed as impressed Men, and ob-liged to serve on board the King's Ships upon be-ing summoned by the Commissaries, who, for this Purpose, enters not only the Name and Place of Abode, but the Description of each Individual, and who-ever keeps out of the Way, or neglects to re-port immedately to the Port and Ship to which he is ordered, when afterwards found, is sent to the Galleys and confined for Life. I mention this, be-cause I have heard that no such Compulsion is used in *France*, as in *England*, for manning their Fleets, whereas we find it used there even with greater Severity.

I must also mention another Circumstance at-tending this Method of registering, worthy per-haps of our Attention, though I never found it re-marked

marked by any of our *English* Writers, I mean, that the Ships of these different Ports are manned by the Seamen registered in each of their Departments, who being of different Provinces, have different Dispositions, and speak a different *Patois* or *Dialect*, unintelligible to each other; so that when the *Brest* and *Toulon* Squadrons meet together, they join like the allied Squadrons of two different Nations, and not without some Contempt of each other: For these of *Toulon* assume the Merit of being more dextrous at their Arms and the Manner of fighting their Ships, whilst those at *Brest*, being used to rougher Seas, pique themselves upon their superior Agility in Navigation.

The King's monthly Pay to these Men, commences on the Day of the last Review the Commissary of the Port makes before the Ship is to depart, and ceases on the very Day of its Return: This Pay is settled according to the Proportions prescribed by the *Ordonnance of 1689*, which, from the Table annexed to it, appears to be, for every Captain 300 Livres *per Month*, Lieutenants 100 Livres, Ensigns, Chaplains, Surgeons, and Pursers, upon an Average, 50 Livres; all other Officers, under the various Distinctions of Masters, Pilots, Gunners, and Boatswain, from 15 to 20 Livres; and as to the common Men, divided into able bodied and fresh Seamen, the Pay to the first is 15 Livres, and to the latter only 12 Livres *per Month*: In this Proportion, the Total of the Pay of each Ship, according to its Rate and Number of Men, appears from the Table abovementioned to be as follows:

Rates

Rates	Number of Men	Monthly Pay	l.	s.	d.
1st	800	11,757 10	514	2	10
2d	500	7929	346	17	10
3d and 4th	350	5654	247	7	3
5th	150	3517	153	17	4

This we must observe is upon the old Establishment in 1689, but at present, as they have more Men in each Rate of a Ship, consequently the monthly Expence of Pay is greater; to which we must add the Gratifications to the Officers, by Way of Allowance for their Table and Servants, and the 40 Livres *per Ann.* to all registered Seamen during their Lives, whether employed or not, which makes the Expence of Pay to the Government upon the Whole much more considerable than what is above specified.

The second Table annexed to the Ordonnance, specifies the Provisions, Rigging, Stores, and Ammunition necessary to every Ship according to its Rate; the Prices of these cannot be put down, as they vary at different Times and in different Countries. In *England* we know, the whole Expence for manning and fitting out a King's Ship is granted by Parliament at the Rate of 4*l.* Sterling *per Man*; which Sum is divided in the certain Proportions allotted for the Pay of the Officers and Seamen, according to their Ranks; and for the Charge of Victualling, Stores, and Ammunition of the Ship according to its Rate; if therefore we in like Manner throw these two Expences together in estimating the Charge of manning and fitting out a *French* Man of War, we shall probably find, that though the Mens Pay be less, yet the Equipment

ment is dearer than in *England*, and taking the one with the other, the Expence is near the same in both Countries; from hence we may conclude, that as the *French* military Forces by Land, are more numerous, and consequently more expensive than ours, that Nation must be the less able to bear an equal Expence at Sea.

Let us now examine what real naval Force they can produce; for which Purpose I procured a List of all the King's Ships in the several Ports of the Kingdom, taken in the Year 1755, which contains an Account of their Names, Rates, when and where built, when refitted, their Quantity of Cannon, Weight of Metal, and Number of Men, which Number of Men to each Rate, as I have just before observed, is more than what was allotted by the old Establishment, and accordingly, by this List, their Ships and Force appear to be as followeth, *viz.*

First Rates 6—at *Brest* 4—at *Toulon* 2—100 Guns, from 36 to 24 Pounders—Men 1000.

Second Rates 22—at *Brest* 12—at *Toulon* 7—at *Rochefort* 3—74 Guns, from 36 to 18 Pounders, Men 750.

Third Rates 29—at *Brest* 11—at *Toulon* 11—at *Rochefort* 7—64 Guns, from 24 to 12 Pounders, Men 580.

Fourth Rates 9—at *Brest* 5—at *Toulon* 3—at *Rochefort* 1—at *Havre de Grace* 1—50 Guns, from 18 to 8 Pounders—Men 350.

Add to these, 23 Frigates—at *Brest* 4—at *Toulon* 7—at *Rochefort* 6—at *Havre de Grace* 6—from 20 to 30 Guns, from 8 to 12 Pounders—and from 200 to 250 Men.

The

The rest of the Navy, as Assistants to the above, consist of the smaller Craft, and upon the Recapitulation of the Whole, the Number is as follows, *viz.*

First Rates	—	—	—	6
Second Rates	—	—	—	22
Third Rates	—	—	—	29
Fourth Rates	—	—	—	9
			—	—
Total of Line of Battle Ships	—	—	66	—
				—
Frigates	—	—	—	23
Flutes	—	—	—	7
Chebecs	—	—	—	4
Advice Boats	—	—	—	3
Bomb Ketch	—	—	—	1
Sloops	—	—	—	9
Galleys	—	—	—	12
			—	—
Total Number of all	—	—	125	—
				—

This Account of the *French* naval Force, like all other Accounts given by themselves of their Strength and Riches, we may suppose to be exaggerated; and therefore it will be necessary to make a little farther Enquiry, to know how many of these Ships are fit to be employed? what Quantity of Stores are in the Magazines of each Port, to compleat their Equipment? and, last of all, and which is indeed the most material, what Number of able-bodied Sailors can they find in their own Kingdom, to man their Ships? In answer to these Questions, they must own, That many of the Ships whose Names

Names appear on Paper are, through Age and Decay, unfit for Service; that the naval Stores in their Arsenals are insufficient for even the Number of Ships that are fit for Service; and that, lastly, whatever Number of Ships they may be able to equip, great Part of them must remain unactive, like empty Hulks in their Harbours, for Want of a sufficient Number of Seamen to put them into Motion.

As a Proof of this, let us suppose all the above Ships, at the Beginning of this War, to have been in good Condition, and a Sufficiency of Stores and Ammunition to equip the Whole; then the Number of Men wanting to complete the Equipage, would have been as follows; *viz.*

	No. of Ships.	No. of Men to each.	Total No. of Men.
First Rates —	6	1000	6000
Ditto 2d —	22	750	16500
Ditto 3d —	29	580	16820
Ditto 4th —	9	420	3780
 Total —	 66	 Line of Battle Ships. —	 43100

Their 23 Frigates, and other smaller Vessels, would require, by the same Method of computing, about —	6000
Total of Men —	49100

Now the whole Trade and Navigation of *France*, according to a Computation I have seen of the Tonnage and Number of their Merchants Ships employed in every Part, could scarcely supply the

King with such a Number of Seamen; or if there had been a Possibility of calling in all these, to serve on board their Men of War, a Stop must have been put to all the other Parts of their Navigation. We have yet a better Proof at present that they have no Possibility of procuring so many, since Half that Number are now Prisoners in *England*, and above one Third of the above Number of their Ships have been taken, and are now a Part of our Navy.

It must be an additional Pleasure to an *Englishman*, whilst he is thus informed of the Insufficiency of his Enemy's Force at Sea, to reflect on the superior Strength of our own naval Power; a Superiority acquired by the Principles enforced by our Act of Navigation, by our Fisheries and Coasting-Trade, and by the Situation of our Colonies on the Continent of *America* bordering on the Seas, which, as well as our Islands and Plantations, necessarily engage a vast Employment for our Shipping. Add to this, that, by our being the Carriers for other Nations, we make the Employment itself of our Seamen a Part of our national Profits, even where we have no Trade; so that, whilst *France* has a Commerce, as I shall show presently, more extensive than its Navigation, *England* appears to have a Navigation more extensive than its Commerce; from hence we are provided with Sailors to make up the Complements of our Men of War, without interrupting the Course of Trade; whereas the *French*, if they carry on a Trade, must lay by their Fleet; or, if they send out their Fleet, they must lay by their Trade.

The *French* Ministry, sensible of their natural Weakness in this Respect, and yet more sensible of the

the Shame and Disgrace they have suffered by our Fleet's insulting not only their Trade, but even their maritime Coasts, have lately been contriving artificial Schemes, and making compulsory Efforts to augment their Marine; but all these Projects we have seen evaporate into the Air, from whence they were formed; for a Force at Sea can only be maintained by a natural Strength acquired by natural Means; I mean, that an Encrease of naval Power must depend on the Encrease of Seamen, and the Encrease of Seamen upon the Encrease of Navigation.

This may lead us to examine how far the Navigation of *France*, and consequently its naval Power, may be extended; and how far and in what Parts we should endeavour, agreeably to the Design of this Work, to weaken that Power, or at least to restrain it from encreasing.

I shall not affect, like some of the *French* Writers, to attribute the Want of an extensive Marine in *France* to the Constitution of their Government, which demands so many People to supply the Church and the Army, the two great Props of their Monarchy, as to leave a smaller Proportion to be distributed in the Employments of Trade and Navigation; nor will it be proper for me, as an *English* Writer, to make Objections against the particular Laws and Ordonnances for their Marine, which seem calculated rather to regulate their Navy, than to promote, like our Act of Navigation, the Encrease of Shipping and Seamen: For since, notwithstanding these Objections, their Marine has been augmented, it will be more interesting for us to enquire, in what Parts, and by what Means, this Augmentation has arisen?

To this Purpose, we may observe, that as neither their Constitution, nor their particular Laws are favourable to their Marine, so neither doth the immediate Trade of the Kingdom to the other Parts of Europe contribute much to the Support of their Navigation ; which may seem the more surprizing, when Commerce has been mentioned as the only Foundation for it : But we are to consider, that great Part of the Products and Manufactures of *France*, are conveyed into the interior Parts of the Continent by Inland Carriage, and that what is demanded by her Maritime Neighbours, is fetched away upon the foreign Bottoms of those Ships each Nation sends thither to purchase them. The Situation likewise of their Country, intersected as it is by other Dominions, admits of little Opportunity for a Coasting Trade, the first Introduction and great Nursery of young Seamen ; and this has been rendered yet the less necessary, by the many Canals which have been cut, to make a Communication from one Sea to the other, through the Inland Parts of the Kingdom.

The Navigation of *France*, being thus limited in *Europe*, must owe its Advancement to those Trades that are carried on by long Sea-Voyages to other Parts of the World ; and, amongst these, it is chiefly supported by their *American* Fisheries, by the Sugar Colonies, and by the *Mediterranean* Trade up to the *Levant*. In these Parts, particularly at the Sugar Islands, their Navigation has been encreased to a Degree that ought to alarm us much more than any Encroachments they may have made on the Continent of *America* ; by the Accounts I have seen of the Difference within these

30 Years past of the Tunnage, as well as Number of Ships, belonging to *St. Domingue* and *Martinique*, both have amounted to more than double what they were in 1730, and had not the last War, as well as this, checked their Growth, the *French* might have raised a Marine from thence, which at this Time would have been formidable both to the Trade and Navy of *England*: In comparing also the Tunnage and Number of Ships employed in all the three Branches of Trade above-mentioned, we shall find they amount to more than two Thirds of all the Navigation of *France*.

This points out to us, that, in the Prosecution of a War with *France*, we should exert our naval Strength chiefly to annoy those Trades, from whence we are to apprehend the greatest Encrease of Navigation. With this View I explained, in my first Representation, how far their Southern Provinces might be distressed by a proper Disposition of one Part of our Fleet in the *Mediterranean*; and had we with the other Part, after taking *Louisbourg*, on which the Security of their *Newfoundland* Fisheries depends, proceeded in our Enterprizes at Sea, and attacked some other Maritime Colonies in *America*, not yet attempted, nor proper to be mentioned in Print, we should have found the Conquest more easy, and the Acquisition of infinite more Importance to the Trade and Navigation of *England*, than all our Successes in the Inland Parts of that Continent, where the Trade is in no Degree worth the Expence we have been at to procure it; and the Navigation so inconsiderable, that I never could find, in any one Year, that more than seven Ships loaded with Merchandizes had been employed in any direct Trade between Old *France* and *Quebec*: I desire to
be

be understood not to include the Ships that are bound to the *West Indies*, who sometimes call at *Louisburgh* and *Quebec*, to exchange Part of their Lading for Lumber, with which they make a trading Voyage to the Western Islands, and bring back their Cargoes of Sugar to *Europe*; for these are more properly to be numbered in the List of the *West India* Ships, and not as Ships employed in the direct Trade between *France* and *Canada*.

I do not mean by this to depreciate the Merit of the Enterprize, or the Glory of those by whose Perseverance and Courage the Conquest of this Country has been obtained; from whence we now are in Hopes of procuring the whole Dominion of the District lying behind our own Settlements, who consequently will be free from being any more alarmed by *French* Encroachments or scalping Savages. This End being obtained, I would presume to recommend it for the Future, as a Point of true *British* Policy, never to enter into Disputes with *France* about Territories where Trade is not concerned; nor even to attempt the procuring of Trades, where no Shipping is employed: The *French* continental Trades, in *North America*, should not therefore be so much the Object of our Jealousy, as their Fisheries and Sugar Trade, which, as they employ a large Navigation, may encrease and strengthen the naval Power of *France*.

Since then *France* can be formidable to us only by its Marine, let us make use of our own, to distress theirs; let us maintain our present Superiority at Sea, by exerting our Strength only upon that Element, where we are superiour: Let us particularly avail ourselves of it in those Parts from whence

France

France is most likely to form its Naval Power, which, if not kept down and depressed, may in Time become a formidable Rival to our own. The Want of such a Power has hitherto appeared with regard to us, the national Weakness of *France*; therefore, according to the Maxim I set out with, we should attack them where they are the weakest; where the late Bravery of our Seamen and the Success of our Fleets, to the Honour of the Commanders, and of those who have the Superintendency of our public Affairs, have convinced the World, that the natural Strength of *England*, properly exerted by Sea, and singly opposed to the single Power of *France*, has hitherto maintained the superiour Dominion.

F I N I S.



